

Remarks

The foregoing amendments and these remarks are in response to the Office Action dated August 21, 2003. This amendment is accompanied by a Request for a Two-Month Extension of Time and the appropriate fee for the Extension of Time.

Prior to addressing the Examiner's rejections on the art, a brief review of applicant's invention is appropriate. Briefly, the invention concerns a video camera furnished with a flat screen viewfinder which comprises a specific fixing system. The fixing system essentially comprises a boom for connecting the viewfinder and the body of the camera. The boom is connected to the camera and to the viewfinder by a first fixing means and a second fixing means. The plurality of fixing means allow fine-tuning and positional retention of the viewfinder with respect to the camera. In particular, the viewfinder can be rotated

I. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-11 were pending in the application. Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 3 and 4 have been amended and are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

II. Claim Rejections on the Art

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,119,203 to Hosaka et al. ("Hosaka"). Claims 1, 2, 5 and 11 also were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,801,774 to Seo ("Seo"). Amended claim 1 recites the limitation of a boom consisting essentially of a rail which is connected by a first end to the camera body and by a second end to the viewfinder. Further, a first fixing means is provided which is securely attached to the camera body for connecting the boom to the camera body. Importantly, neither Hosaka nor Seo teach or suggest this limitation. Instead, Hosaka and Seo each disclose complicated structures which are much more expensive to produce.

For instance, Hosaka discloses an axial member 26 supported by a bearing section 25. Instead of being securely attached to the camera body, the bearing

section 26 is attached to a plate 20, which in turn is slidably attached to a shoe engaging member 22, which itself mounts to a shoe 7 mounted on the lower surface of an image pickup machine. To mount an LCD viewfinder 19 to a camcorder body 11, Seo discloses an annular engaging section 52 connecting the LCD viewfinder 19 to a strap body 33, which is connected to a plate 40, which in turn is connected to a threaded shaft 21b that threads into a foot 21a, and finally the foot 21a fits into a fixing member 21 that is attached to the camcorder body.

Claim 2 recites that the first fixing means is a sliding link furnished with a means of clamping and braking. Neither Hosaka or Seo teach or disclose this limitation. Hosaka's shoe engaging member 22 mounts into shoe 7, but no means are provided for clamping and braking engaging member 22. Seo provides a shoe 16, a foot 21a that fits into the shoe 16, and a fixing member 21 that fixes a threaded shaft 21b into the foot 21a, but Seo does not teach or suggest any of these being a sliding link furnished with a means of clamping and braking.

Claim 5 recites a second fixing means which ensures at least two rotations according to two axes of rotation. Claim 1, from which claim 5 depends, recites that the second fixing means connects the boom to the view finder. Neither Hosaka nor Seo recite the limitation of claim 5. In Hosaka, the liquid crystal TV receiver 10 is detachably fixed to a monitor mounting unit 29. Although the TV receiver 10 can be detached from the mounting unit 29, the TV receiver 10 is not rotatable with respect to the mounting unit 29. Instead, it is the mounting unit 29 which is rotatable with respect to the plate 20. Thus, the axes of rotation are provided by different mounting means, namely rotation of the monitor support arm 27 about the shaft member 26, and rotation of the shaft member 26 with respect to the bearing section 25 (See FIG. 3). Referring to Seo, the LCD viewfinder 19 is attached to the strap body 33 via the engaging section 52, which provides only a single axis of rotation. A second axis of rotation is provided by a different mounting means, namely shaft 21b.

Claim 11 recites the limitation that the boom extends towards the rear of the camera so that a possible position of the viewfinder lies in the extension of the optical axis of the lens. Both Hosaka and Seo wholly fail to teach or suggest this limitation. Hosaka's TV receiver is disposed to one side of the camera body or on top of the camera body. Similarly, Seo's LCD viewfinder is disposed above the camcorder body.



Appl. No. 09/535,988
Amdt. dated
Reply to Office Action dated August 21, 2003

III. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 6-10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Notwithstanding that all claims are now believed to be in condition for allowance, new claims 12-16 have been added to present claims 6-10 in independent form.

Applicant respectfully request a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted
Eric AUFFRET,

1/12/2004

By: Francis A. Davenport
Francis A. Davenport
Reg. No. 36,316
(609) 734-6805

Patent Operations
Thomson Licensing, Inc.
PO Box 5312,
Princeton,
NJ 08543-0028

RECEIVED
JAN 20 2004
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800